

ON THE USE OF GREEK WORDS IN THE WRITINGS OF ST. COLUMBANUS OF LUXEUIL

M. Roger has passed a somewhat severe judgement on the Latinity of St. Columbanus¹; it possesses, however, certain interesting features, of which the most remarkable is its use of words derived from Greek. Sixteen of these have been listed by Schultze², and, while many of them are common in poetic or ecclesiastical Latin, there are also a few rare and peculiar terms, the occurrence of which raises two questions, both of importance in the study of Irish literature — how far did the Saint's knowledge of Greek extend, and whence was it derived? He had been trained in the best scholarship of his country's monastic schools; his biographer, Jonas, tells of his long studies in grammar, rhetoric, geometry and Holy Scripture³, and a chance allusion to his « answering » St. Sinell wisely suggests that he may have then attained the academic degree of « Fursaintidh » (illustrator)⁴; at Bangor, before his departure for France, he appears to have occupied the position of principal teacher⁵.

He had himself been educated by St. Sinell and St. Comgall, both members of the Second Order of Irish Saints, which owed

1. ROGER, *L'Enseignement des Lettres Classiques*, p. 231: « Le fonds de sa langue est formé de latin ecclésiastique, avec l'abus des mots abstraits, des mots composés et des hellénismes... Le style est sans art » etc.

2. *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, VI, p. 236.

3. JONAS, *Vita S. Columbani* I c. 3.

4. Cf. *Brehon Laws*, IV, 357: « He answers his tutor with the sense of an ollave, and gives the sense of every difficulty on account of the clearness of his judgement ».

5. *Vita S. Galli auct. Wettino* (*M. G. H. Script. Rev. Merov.*, IV, p. 257); and *Vita S. Deicolae* (O' HANLON, *Lives of the Irish Saints*, I, p. 304).

more to the British influence of St. David, Cadoc and Gildas, than to the earlier traditions of St. Patrick; and this foreign influence may well have brought Greek with it to Ireland, for it was from Gildas that the Irish received a Mass¹, and Gildas is said to have possessed and used a Greek missal². While well acquainted with the Latin authors, pagan as well as Christian³, St. Columbanus makes only three references⁴ to Greek writings, and it is doubtful whether he had studied these in the original. Yet, although his knowledge of Greek literature does not appear to have been extensive, his use of the Greek vocabulary, and even of what seem to be colloquial terms, indicates that he had at least some acquaintance with the language; and in the following pages, a list will be offered of all his Greek words that seem to be worthy of remark. References, except where otherwise stated, will be to the edition of Migne⁵.

Abbas — All the passages in the *Regula Coenobialis* (218 D, 219 A, 220 A, 221 B, 224 A) where this word occurs are suspected of being later additions⁶; and Krusch⁷ maintains that the term normally employed by Columbanus is *senior* (cf. 209 A). But *abbas* is found in an undoubtedly genuine passage of the *Regula Monachorum* (213 B).

Agon (277 A).

Anathematizatio (278 B) and *Anathematizare* (281 B and *M. G. H. Epp.* III, p. 179 line II).

1. *Catalogue of the Saints of Hibernia*, in Haddan and Stubbs *Councils*, II, p. 293.

2. MORAN, *Acta S. Brendani*, p. 13: « et habebat sanctus Gildas Missalum librum scriptum Graecis literis, et possitus est ille liber super altare. »

3. Amongst the poets, Columbanus quotes from Persius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, Juvenius, Prudentius and Ausonius.

4. To Eusebius twice (MIGNE, *Patr. Lat.* 80, cols. 260 C and 266 D); and once to Basil (ib. 267 D).

5. *Patr. Lat.* vol. 80. An additional Epistle is printed by GUNDLACH in *M. G. H. Epp.* III; the authenticity of this is disputed by SEEBASS in *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* XVII, pp. 245 sq. The only edition of the *Carmen Navale* is that of DUMMLER in *Neues Archiv*, VI, pp. 190-1. The Bobbio Commentary on the Psalms, sometimes attributed to Columbanus, is not considered in this article.

6. See the edition by SEEBASS in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* XVII.

7. *Ionae Vitae Sanctorum* (Hanover 1905) intro., p. 24, note 2.

Antiphona (212 B).

Archimandrita (213 B).

Azyma neut. plur. (281 C and 262 A).

Blasphemus (210 B) and *Blasphemare* (224 B and 225 C).

Bravium (256 D). i. e. βαβεῖον.

Bubum (261 D) — « sed hoc soporans spina Dagonis, hoc imbibit bubum erroris » (innovations in the Easter cycle). The word is glossed as *senium*, *languor* in *Gloss. Plac.* V 8, 19 ; but here it bears the sense of the Greek βουβών (*tumor*), unless, which is less probable, it is used as an equivalent of *bubo*, with the meaning « screech-owl » (cf. Varro *Ling.* 5, 75).

Byssus (Ep. VI — *M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 180 line 28) — « haec pauca in bysso multa disserens, hanc scribiciunculam... tibi scribere non timui. » *Byssus* is defined as « charta in qua scribitur » in the Index Verborum to this volume of the *M. G. H.*, a sense found in *Ep. Aldhelmi ad Geruntium* (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 232) ; while the glosses (e. g. *Corpus Gloss. Lat.* IV 489, 10) define it as *sericum* and other forms of clothing. But Columbanus does not regard himself as having used many words or much paper ; he calls his production a *scribiciuncula*, a brief note. He claims that his letter has not been equal to the profundity of the subject treated ; and *byssus* here must have the sense of *abyssus*, a usage not elsewhere found in Latin, but not unknown in Greek (cf. Herodt. 3, 23 χωπέειν ἐς βυσσόν).

Calcalenterus (260 C) — « Quid ergo dicis de Pascha XXI aut XXII lunae, quod... non esse Pascha, nimirum tenebrosus a multis comprobatur calcalenteris ? » The reading here given is that of Fleming's *Collectanea Sacra* ; the other source for establishing the text, St. Gall Ms. 1346, transcribed by Metzler in the seventeenth century from a Bobbio Ms. now lost, presents the emendation *computariis*, with a marginal note to the effect that the lost original read *cacalaenteris*. Three other emendations are mentioned in Du Cange — *calculatoribus*, *calendaris*, and *chalcenteris*, the last suggested by Origen's title of χαλκέντερος, derived from his laborious studies, and certainly the most reasonable guess.

Castalitas (259 C) — « Domino Sancto et in Christo Patri

(St. Gregory the Great)... *theoria utpote divina castalitatis potito...* » Fleming, and Migne, read *castulitatis*; Gundlach emends to *causalitatis*. But the word may stand, in the sense of «eloquence»; for we find a gloss in the eighth century Cod. Sangall. 912 (*Corpus Gloss. Lat.* IV 214, 4) «castalitati de elogutione.»

Cathegita (289 C i. e. *Monosticha* line 112) is scanned with the penultimate syllable short — «Vita aliena tuae tibi sit cathegita vitae.»

Celotes (281 D) cf. Isid. 19 *Orig. c.* 1: «Celones quas Graeci κέλῆρας vocant, id est veloces biremes vel triremes agiles, et ad ministerium classis aptae.»

Cenodoxia (282 C) — «necessitate magis quam cenodoxia scribere coactus sum.» But in *Instructio* XVII 259 A), *vana gloria* replaces *cenodoxia* as the seventh principal vice; whereas *cenodoxia* occurs in the corresponding passage of Cassian (*Inst.* V, 1).

Chilosus (262 B) — «...pie namque me, scito licet saltuatim et hyperbolice, chilosum os aperire». Du Cange comments «an a χῆλος, *labrum*?» The word is not found elsewhere, and may most justly be regarded as a colloquialism; the closest parallel is *chilones* («homines brevioribus labiis» — Gloss. vet. ex cod. reg. 7613), but it must be noted that this latter occurs also in the form *cilones*, where it is glossed «quorum capita oblonga» (*Corpus Gloss. Lat.* V 14, 14; 55, 5).

Chrismal — «Qui oblitus fuerit chrismal, pergens procul ad opus aliquod...» (217 C) et «Qui autem meruerit sacrificium, continuo bibet aquam. Qui in chrismal fuderit sacrificium comedat.» (222 C). Here the word must clearly mean a receptacle, not for chrism, but for the consecrated Host; compare the *Pontifical* of Egbert, p. 48, «prefatio chrismalis: osemus... ut Deus... hoc ministerium corporis... Christi gerulum benedictione... implere dignetur.»

Copes — «Qui nova quaeque, licet epicroica, iudicant, copes nimirum effecti, hyperbolice.» (281 D). *Copis* is found as the equivalent of *opulentus* in Varro (*Ling.* 5, 92); the Index Verborum to the *M. G. H.* suggests κόπις (*loquax*) as the meaning here. But Metzler (St. Gall Ms. 1346) read *coppes*, and the true

text may well be « copodes » (κοπώδεις, *molesti*). Cf. Orib. Bern. 18, 29.

Cyclus (261 A).

Cymba (278 A).

Decalogus (M. G. H. *Epp.* III p. 179 lines 24, 39).

Delphis — « trans Euriporum rheuma, trans Delphinum dorsa, trans turgescentem dodrantem... » (280 A).

Dodrans (ib.), though it belongs as much to Latin as to Greek, is, in this meaning, an interesting specimen of the Irish vocabulary; cf. *Hisperica Famina* A 402 (« tumente dodrante inundat freta »), A 491 and *Adelphus Adelpha* lines 4-6 (« blebomen agialus nicate dodrantibus; sic mundi vita huius »). The gloss « dodrans .i. malina » occurs in the tenth century Ms. B. M. Harl. 3376 (see F. G. H. Jenkinson, *Hisperica Famina*, intro. p. XV). Is this sense peculiar to Irish Latin?

Dogma (261 A).

Ebdomada — « per singulas hebdomadas » (212 T); « septem ebdomadas plenas » (M. G. H. *Epp.* III p. 179 line 33); « ad alteram diem expletionis ebdomadae septimae » (ib. line 34

Eleemosynae (212 C and 228 B in the plural; 228 A in the singular form).

Elogium — « illud cuiusdam egregium sapientis elogium » (259 C).

Epicrocus — « qui nova quaeque, licet epicroca, judicant » (281 D). Du Cange comments: « Leg. videtur Epichrona ex ἐπίχρονος vel ἐπιχρόνιος, *vetustus*. » But *epicroca* with the meaning *perlucida* is found in the glosses (*Corpus Gloss. Lat.* V 65, 5; 628, 37; 634, 4) and in Plautus (*Pers.* 96 — « Nilist macrum illud epicrocum pellucidum »). This is certainly the meaning here.

Ethnicus (267 B).

Eulogiae — « eulogias immundus accipiens » (217 D). In I Reg. 25, 27, where the Septuagint reads εὐλογία, the Vulgate has *benedictionem*; and this sense of the word is common in the later ecclesiastical writers (e. g. Reg. S. Bened. c. 54 — « nullatenus liceat monacho... litteras aut eulogias vel quaelibet mu-

nuscula accipere aut dare, sine praecepto Abbatis sui. » — and Alcuin *Ep.* 161 — « vestras suscepimus eulogias. »). But the technical meaning of « pain bénit », found in Augustine (*Ep.* 86) and Paulinus of Nola (*Ep.* V c. 21), occurs in Irish Latin, e. g. Adamnan *Vita S. Columbae* ii 13 (p. 121 in Reeves' edition) — « in refectorio eulogiam frangere » — though it is to be noted that here the interlinear gloss in Cod. D reads — « id est salutationem vel donum ». Menard writes (*Patr. Lat.* 103 col. 1223) : « Eulogiae panes sunt qui in ecclesia a sacerdote benedicuntur, olimque distruebantur iis qui... diebus festis et dominicis non sumebant eucharistiam ». This is the meaning of the word in the passage quoted from St. Columbanus ; and it is common also in Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc.* v 14 ; vi 32 ; vii 1 etc.).

Euripus (262 B and 280 A).

Evangelium (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 179 line 24 and p. 180 line 9).

Holocausta neut. plur. (ib. p. 178 line 18).

Hyacinthinus — « Qui negligit sacrificium, et immutatum fuerit... si rubro colore, viginti dies poenitat ; si hyacinthino, quindecim dies poeniteat. » (222 C).

Hyperbolicus (259 C) and *Hyperbolice* (262 B ; 275 B ; 279 D ; 281 D).

Idioma — « mihi Jonae Hebraice, Peristerae Graece, Columbae Latine, potius tantum vestrae idiomate linguae nuncupato... » (282 C) ¹. Cf. Charisius V p. 255 (ed. Putsch) — « idiomata... enim sunt omnia, quae pro nostro more efferimus tantum secuti Graecos ».

Micrologus — « licet enim mihi, nimirum micrologo... » (259 C) et « micrologus eloquentissimo... scribere audet Bonifacio Patri Palumbus » (274 C). Cf. Jonas *Vita S. Columbani*, II 10 — « comperendinanti microloga et frivola garrulanti... vir sagax respondit ». — and *Hymn. Apostol. (Antiphon. Bangor. 7)* — « nos mortales micrologi. »

Neomenia fem. (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 177 line 34, p. 178 lines 14 et 22, p. 180 line 15).

1. This passage does not prove that Columbanus knew Greek ; though it appears to be used for such a purpose by SCHULTZE, *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, VI, p. 236.

Neotericus — « post neotericam orthodoxorum auctorum scripturam » (280 C). Cf. Sulp. Sever. I *Dial.* 6 — « libri neoterici et recens scripti. » Elsewhere, the word has a derogatory sense, e. g. *Ep. Wisigoticae* 20 (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 689 line 27) — « neotericus dereliquens, fidei sanctae catholicae obuius existens. »

Economus (219 A). But, like *abbas*, this may belong to a later addition.

Olympias — « Nunc ad Olympiadis ter senos (*al.* senae) venimus annos. » (294 A i. e. *ad Fedolium* line 163). Cf. Martial VII 40, 6 — « Hic prope ter senas vixit Olympiadas. » Great debate has raged on the question of whether *Olympias* is to be taken here in its Greek meaning of a four-year period, or in the sense of the Latin five-year *lustrum*. St. Columbanus undoubtedly died in 615 A. D. ; the former suggestion would date his birth to 542-5, the latter to 528-33¹. Neither chronology agrees with Jonas, who² says that Columbanus was twenty (variant thirty) years old when he left Ireland — an event which may with certainty be dated to 590 A. D. ³. In consequence of this discrepancy, Aubrey Gwynn⁴ denies that the poem to Fedolius is from the pen of Columbanus ; but little value attaches to the evidence of Jonas at this point, for he imagines Sigebert to have been king of Burgundy when Columbanus arrived, whereas in fact, Sigibert never ruled Burgundy, and died in 575. Mrs. Concanon⁵ suggests that the poem is in reality a youthful work, a school-exercise following a set pattern ; but no formal exercise is likely to have produced the preceding lines :

« Haec tibi doctaram morbis oppressus acerbis,
Corpore quos fragili patior, tristisque senecta. »

(*ad Fedolium* lines 160-1)

1. Cf. A. HAUCK, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, I, pp. 600-1.

2. JONAS, *Vita S. Columbani*, I, c. 4.

3. Jonas I 20 speaks of his exile (610 A. D.) occurring in the twentieth year after his arrival ; and *Ep. II* (266 B), probably written in 603, refers to his 12 years' stay.

4. In *Studies* VII, 474-84. The names Colum, Columba, Columban and Colman are, of course, very frequently found ; Adamnan mentions five Columbans (i 5 ; ii 43 ; iii 12 ; ii 16 ; and ii 21), while the catalogue of Saints in the *Book of Leinster* lists 228 Colmans and 19 Colums.

5. *Life of St. Columban*, p. 41.

If *Olympias* here means a fixed period, it would, considering the intellectual and physical vigour displayed by Columbanus at the very end of his life, most reasonably be taken as a period of four years. But may it not conceivably be a barbarism for *olympica vita*, meaning the monastic life (cf. Lanfred *Vita S. Swithin.* 3 — *Anal. Boll.* 4, 395 — « et a fratribus olympicam in utroque cœnobio ducentibus vitam... ») ? If this interpretation could be substantiated, all difficulties would be solved, and Columbanus would be a man in his late thirties, looking back on his profession eighteen years before ; but there appears to be no parallel for such a usage.

Orthodoxus (275 C ; 279 B ; 280 C). There is also a passage (281 A) which hints at the literal meaning of the word — « orthodoxus Christianus, qui recte Dominum glorificat. »

Paraliticus (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 178 line 25)

Paximatum (221 A etc.) cf. Cassian *Inst.* 4, 14 etc. and Gildas *de Poen.* 1.

Peristera — « mihi Peristerae Graece » (282 C).

Rheuma — « trans Euriporum rheuma » (280 A). Cf. Jonas *Ep. Praef. ad Vit. S. Col.* — « antas solere rheumate gurgitum... sentes apprehendere ». also Ambrose lib. 5 *Hexaem.* c. 10 — « dicas, si ascendentes videas, rheuma quoddam esse. »

Scandalum (213 C ; 228 B ; 230 A ; 269 D).

Scenophegia — « solvit et scenophegiam, quando dicebat : non ascendam ad diem festum hunc. » (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 178 line 27). This noun occurs as a feminine singular in Josephus *Ant.* VII 154 — « scenophegiam celebrantes » — and in Sed. Scott. *Carm.* II 33, 8 — « tu scenophegiae gaudia festa dabis. » It is, on the other hand, a neuter plural in Hilary of Poitiers, *Tract. in Psalm.* XXXVI c. 7 — « festivitas scenopegiarum » — and in Eucherius, *op.* ed. Wotke p. 154 line 12 — « scenopegia cum tabernacula a Judaeis finguntur ob memoriam tabernaculorum. »¹

Schisma (278 A ; *M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 180 lines 27 et 33).

1. See the article by V. USSANI in *Rendiconti della Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, ser. VI, vol. IX. — DU CANGE strangely refers to the *ars scenofactoria*.

Schynthia — at 261 B, Migne, following Fleming and Metzler (marginal note), reads : « Minor, fateor, a te hunc Galliae errorem (the Victorian Easter cycle) acsi schynteneum iam diu non fuisse rasum. » Du Cange comments : « Graecam vocem σχυνω-*τενής* putat Editor, id est, tamquam si rectum ac legitimum esset. » It is more than doubtful whether the word can bear such a meaning ; and Gundlach emends the text to read *scismaticum*. But a much more plausible conjecture would be *schynthiam* ; cf. *Corpus Gloss. Lat.* IV 568, 5 — « scynthiae, neumacula » i. e. « naevum, macula. » To describe the new Easter computation as a « wart » which must be « scraped away », is in exact accord with the tenor of the passage ; and there is a remarkable parallel in the Fifth Epistle (282 A) — « ut cito tollatis hunc naevum de sanctae cathedrae claritate. »

Simoniacus (262 D).

Sophia (289 C ; 291 A ; 291 B i. e. *Monosticha* lines 114, 178 and 184). The penultimate syllable is here a short quantity ; whereas in Sed. Scott. (*Carm.* II 1, 21 ; 14, 12 ; 38, 26) it is invariably long. Cf. also Adamnan *Vita S. Columbae* i 2 : « studiis dialis sophias (*gen.*) deditus » ; and *Hisperica Famina*, A 4, A 354, D 141.

Strofa — « State animo fixi, hostisque spernite strofes » (*Car-men Navale* line 16 ; ed. E. Dümmler in *Beuies Archiv* etc., VI, pp. 190-1). Cf. Bede *ad Matth.* 21 (*Patr. Lat.* 92, col. 99 C) : « strophae inventores » (of the Pharisees) ; Aldhelm *Virgin.* V 922 : « genus humanum strofis elidere certat » ; and, in a slightly different sense, *Vita S. Galli auct. Walahfrid.* II 25 : « strofa facta, per eandem viam nesciens remeavit. »

Synaxis, with the explanation « id est cursus », occurs at 212 A, 216 D, and 217 C ; without explanation, at 200 C and 223 C, these latter passages probably belonging to a later recension of the *Regula Coenobialis* (cf. *abbas* and *oconomus*.) The explanation is found also in the *Regula S. Donati* c. 26 — « similiter poeniteat, quae humiliationem in synaxi, id est in cursu, oblita fuerit » — and ib. c. 75 — « de synaxi, id est de cursu psalmorum... » On the other hand, the word stands alone in the *Regula S. Benedicti* c. 17 — « vespertina autem synaxis IV psalmis cum antiphonis terminetur. » It is defined by Cassian

(*Inst.* II, 10) as « conventus seu congregatio monachorum, ad orationem et psalmodiam coeuntium. »

Synodus (276 A ; 278 B).

Theoria — « theoria utpote divina castalitatis potito » (259 C). The word is here used in a general sense ; normally it has the special meaning defined in Ps.-Bede *Hom. in Assumpt. B. V. M.* (*Patr. Lat.* 94, col. 421 A) — « theoria : id est contemplatio Dei. » Cf. *Vita S. Columbae* (*Boll. tom. 5 Sept.* p. 624 col. I) — « in tantam subito ferebatur theoriam. »

Theoricus — « vita theorica » (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 180 line 21). Cf. *Vita Fursei* c. 8 — « derelictis omnibus curis et rebus, nudus ad fratrem suum, qui iam theoricam pascebat vitam, solus profectus est. »

Thetis — « non tam thetis visibilis quam intelligibilis dorso, quod optime nostris, nobis opposito. » (269 A). The form *tithis* is common in the *Hisperica Famina* — « alias serenum compaginat tithis situm » (A 393) ; « bombosi tithis flustrum » (A 17) ; also at B 133 and B 203 (ed. Jenkinson). The adjective *tithicus* is found in Gildas, *de Exc. Brit.* c. 19 (ed. Mommsen p. 35 line 9) — « trans tithicam vallem evecti. »

Typus — « agnus, qui in typo Christi in Pascha occidi praecipitur » (*M. G. H. Epp.* III p. 178 line 41) and *Typicus* — « typicum nostrum Pascha » (ib. p. 179 line 8).

Zelare (276 B) ; *Zelosus* (276 A) ; and *Zelus* (275 D ; 277 D ; 278 B ; 279 B ; 280 C ; 281 C).

Amongst the words listed above, three separate classes may be distinguished. First, there is a large group which comes from the Bible¹ and the Latin Fathers ; to this belong — *agon*, *anathematizare*, *antiphona*, *azyma*, *blasphemare*, *bravium*, *cenodoxia*, *decalogus*, *dogma*, *ebdomada*, *eleemosynae*, *ethnicus*, *evangelium*, *holocausta*, *hyacinthinus*, *hyperbolicus*, *neomenia*, *orthodo-*

1. The text of Columbanus's Biblical quotations frequently differs from that of the Vulgate. CHAPMAN, *Notes on the Early History of the Vulgate Gospels*, p. 177 suggests that the Irish Church possessed its own translation of the Scriptures, and that this may have had affinities with the Greek versions ; some material is collected in HADDAN and STUBBS, *Councils*, vol. I, pp. 170-98.

xus, *paraliticus*, *rheuma*, *scandalum*, *scenophegia*, *schisma*, *synodus*, *zelare*, and perhaps a few more. Then there is a second, smaller group, which Columbanus most probably derived from his study of the Latin poets — *delphis*, *Euripus*, *Olympias*, *sophia*, *thetis*. Finally, there are a few more peculiar words — *bubum*, *byssus*, *calcalenterus*, *castalitas*, *chilosus*, *copes*, *epicroca*, *micrologus*, *schynthia* — some of which, at least, suggest the spoken, rather than the written, language, and are in the nature of vivid colloquialisms. These words are not a precious affectation of recondite learning, but the out-pourings of a passionate temper, unable to restrain itself within the sober bounds of Latin; and it is to the origin of these words that attention must be turned. The question at issue is whether Greek remained a living language, at this time, in some isolated parts of Western Europe; the evidence for its survival in Gaul will be presented first, and thereafter that for its transmission thence to Ireland.

The South of France had close connections with the Near Eastern countries from the beginning; and although comparatively few Greek inscriptions have been found¹, Greek has left its mark on some of the place-names of Provence². By the year 376, it had become difficult to find a Greek rhetor³; but Jerome records⁴ that vernacular, if not literary, Greek remained alive in his day at Marseilles. Ausonius uses a number of Greek loan-words, but has to translate these for the benefit of the general public⁵; while Eucherius, writing Instructions for the reasonably well-educated Salonius, is obliged to explain, under the title of *Quaestiones difficiliores*, the simplest of Greek terms⁶. On the other hand, we find, about the year 450, at the monastery of Condat in the Jura mountains, that an exceptional scholar, Eugendus, was studying the Greek as well as the Latin authors⁷. Episcopal decrees were authenticated with certain Greek letters,

1. Cf. LE BLANT, *Épigraphie Chrétienne*, p. 43; only 9 Christian inscriptions in Greek are found in Gaul, and there is an equal scarcity of pagan ones.

2. Antibes, Napoule etc.

3. *Cod. Theod.* xiii, 3, 11.

4. *Opera*, ed. Vallarsi, vii, 425.

5. e. g. in the *Ludus Septem Sapientium*.

6. such as — *talentum*, *obol*, *drachma*, *Tehos*, *Christus*, *Hagios*, *angelus*.

7. Cf. *Vita Eugendi*, A.A. SS. Bol. i. Jan., p. 50.

and the «litterae formatae» given to travelling priests were sometimes composed in Greek¹. Greek was even occasionally used in the public worship of the Church; at the beginning of the sixth century, Caesarius of Arles issued a popular form of service, with selections for congregational singing, in Latin for Latin-speakers, and in Greek for the Greeks². This fact indicates clearly that Greek remained a living tongue at this time in Gaul, and it was no doubt spoken by those «Syrian merchants», of whom we hear, about the year 440, in Salvian³, and frequently thereafter in Gregory of Tours⁴. Whether they retained any trading connections with the East, after the irruption of the Vandal fleets, is extremely doubtful⁵; but it is clear that they preserved their native language, in isolated pockets of Greek-speaking individuals, from the fact that Gregory was helped by one of these «Syrians» to translate into Latin the story of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus⁶. Chilperic was sufficiently interested in Greek to attempt to add four Greek letters to the Latin alphabet⁷; and Guntram, at Orleans in 585, was greeted by a great crowd, which included Latins, Jews and Syrians, presenting loyal addresses in their native tongues⁸. St. Columbanus himself met one of these foreigners, a Syrian woman of Orleans, who welcomed him during his banishment as a fellow-stranger in a strange land⁹. The cumulative evidence of these facts indicates that in Gaul, while the literary study of Greek had almost died out by the end of the fourth century, the spoken language survived, at least in some parts, for a further two hundred years.

As to the Irish, it is sometimes maintained that, prior to the

1. T. HAARHOFF, *Schools of Gaul*, p. 223.

2. *Vita S. Caesarii* I ii 15 (*Patr. Lat.* 67, col. 1008). — «...ut laicorum popularitas psalmos et hymnos pararet, altaque et modulata voce instar clericorum, alii Graece, alii Latine, prosas antiphonasque cantarent.»

3. *De Gubernatione Dei*, IV, 69.

4. GREG. TUR., *Hist. Franc.*, VII, 31, VIII, 1; *De Glor. Mart.* 94.

5. See the criticism of Pirenne's theories on this subject by N. H. BAYNES in *Journal of Roman Studies*, XIX, p. 230 sq.

6. GREG. TUR., *De Glor. Mart.* 94.

7. *Id.*, *Hist. Franc.*, V, 44; the letters were ω, ψ, ζ, δ.

8. *Id.*, *Hist. Franc.*, VIII, 1 — «et hinc lingua Syrorum, hinc Latinorum, hinc etiam ipsorum Judaeorum in diversis laudibus varie concrepebat.»

9. JONAS, *Vita S. Columbani*, I, c. 21.

ninth century, they knew no Greek except the few words that might be gleaned from a study of the glossaries¹. But why, if they did not study Greek, did they possess these glossaries at all? It is much more reasonable to suppose that some knowledge of Greek was taken to Ireland by fugitives from the barbarian invasions; and these foreign teachers may even be referred to in the *Confession* of St. Patrick². In this connection, Zimmer³ was the first to notice the significance of a note preserved in a Leyden Ms. of the twelfth century⁴, the conclusion of which runs as follows — «Et ab his depopulatio totius imperii exordium sumpsit, quae ab Unis et Guandalis, Gotis et Alanis peracta est, sub quorum vastatione omnes sapientes cismarini fugam ceperunt, et in transmarinis, videlicet in Hibernia⁵ et quocumque se receperunt, maximum profectum sapientiae incolis illarum regionum adhibuerunt.» There were direct trade routes between Ireland and Western Gaul, along which these fugitives may have travelled; but much of this cultural influence appears to have come by way of Britain, for the Irish pronunciation of Latin, reflected in orthography, indicates that the Irish had Britons as their principal teachers⁶. One of the most important of these was Gildas, whose possession of a Greek missal has been already mentioned. St. Brendan was able to read a missal written in Greek, though his ability to do was regarded as miraculous⁷. The vernacular nature of these studies is indicated by the uncouth and sometimes incomprehensible Hellenisms of the *Hisperica Famina*. But the Irish studied classical literature with avidity, for with them the classics had never had those pagan associations with which they were linked in the minds of continental Christians; and the existence in Ireland of Greek-speaking teachers is abundantly clear from the evidence available. St. Columba of Iona learned Greek grammar⁸; and about

1. Cf. Esposito in *Studies*, Dec. 1912.

2. *Trip. Life* ed. Stokes, II, 359 — «rhetorici Domini ignari.»

3. In *Zeitschr. für Celtische Philologie*, IX, p. 119.

4. Published by MÜLLER in *Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik*, 93, p. 389.

5. Muller's emendation for *Hiberia*.

6. Cf. J. RYAN, *Irish Monasticism*, p. 380.

7. *Vitae SS. Hib.* ed. Plummer, I, 141.

8. «Atgaill grammataig greic» — see the eulogy by DALLAN (*A. C. C.*, 123).

the year 610, « scribe et abbas Benn cuir Mosinu mac Cum in compotem a greco quodam sapiente memorialiter didicit. »¹ In the seventh century, Angles and Saxons were going to Ireland in order to learn Greek²; the *Antiphonary of Bangor*, and Codex A of Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*, contain a number of Greek words and phrases, written in Greek characters³; and in 632, St. Cummian wrote a Paschal letter to Abbot Segienus of Iona, which is thus described by Stokes⁴ — « I call this letter a marvellous composition because of the vastness of its learning; it quotes, besides the Scriptures and Latin authors, Greek writers like Origen and Cyril, Pachomius the head and reformer of Egyptian monasticism, and Damascius, the last of the celebrated neo-Platonic philosophers of Athens, who lived about the year 500, and wrote all his works in Greek. Cummian discusses the calendars of the Macedonians, Hebrews and Copts, giving us the Hebrew, Greek and Egyptian names of months and cycles, and tells us that he had been sent as one of a deputation of learned men a few years before, to ascertain the practice of the Church of Rome⁵. » How much of his learning Cummian owed to his foreign travels, and how much to his native education, may be left an open question; Traube⁶ perhaps goes too far in maintaining that, at the time of Charles the Bald, the the Irish were the sole representatives of Greek scholarship remaining in the West; but at least it must be admitted that, in the time of St. Columbanus, there was in Ireland a wide interest in Greek studies, and an opportunity for acquiring a colloquial, if not a literary, knowledge of that tongue.

Zimmer has maintained that the Irish Greek, which has come down to us in fragments, is a survival of the living speech of the third and fourth centuries⁷; Kuno Meyer produced some confirmation of this theory from a study of the transcription of Greek

1. Cf. SCHEPS, *Die ältesten Evangelienhandschriften der Würzburger Bibliothek* p. 27.

2. Aldhelm ed. Giles, p. 94.

3. Cf. H. ZIMMER, *Pelagius in Ireland*, p. 5 note.

4. G. T. STOKES in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, May 1892, p. 195.

5. The letter of Cummian is printed in Ussher, *Works* IV, pp. 432-43.

6. TRAUBE, *O Roma Nobilis*, p. 65.

7. ZIMMER, *Ueber die Handelsverbindungen &c.*, p. 561.

into Irish letters¹; and although the Irish knowledge of Greek was inferior in quality, it is clear that Greek was still a living language, spoken by a few exiles from abroad, in the Ireland of the sixth century. This vernacular Greek appears as the obvious origin of such peculiarities as we have noticed in the vocabulary of St. Columbanus. He is certainly not a profound Greek scholar; but wherever he requires some vivid phrase to eke out the poverty, and enliven the flatness, of the conventional Latin of his day, he falls back upon such forceful and colloquial expressions as *bubum* and *chilosus*; much as a Scotsman of to-day might colour his writings with a few words borrowed from the French. *Multae terricolis linguae, coelestibus una*. While barbarian kings divided Europe into rival nationalities, the Christian Saint, with his skill in ancient tongues, remained as a symbol of the unity that once had been.

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1. MEYER, *Learning in Ireland in the Fifth Century*, p. 27.